



Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

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February 5, 2011

Testimony in Opposition to:

Raised Bill No. 830: AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF CERTAIN OUTDOOR WOODBURNING FURNACES

Submitted by: Donald Tuller, President, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

The following testimony is submitted on behalf of the Connecticut Farm Bureau, a statewide nonprofit membership organization of over 5,000 families dedicated to farming and the future of Connecticut agriculture.

Senator Edward Meyer, Representative Richard Roy and members of the Environment Committee:

Connecticut Farm Bureau opposes Raised Bill 830. We strongly support the use of alternative fuels not only for farmers but for all citizens of the state of Connecticut. Wood heat has long been a viable fuel alternative to fossil fuels for Connecticut citizens. Farmers, as well as thousands of Connecticut residents depend on outdoor wood burning furnaces to heat their homes and businesses without negatively impacting their neighbors. Wood is a renewable resource, growing in abundance in Connecticut.

In 2005, the Legislature enacted Public Act 05-227 An Act Concerning Clean Air Strategies, which regulates the location, stack height, usage of outdoor wood furnaces and enforcement by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and local municipalities. There are many locations in rural Connecticut where outdoor wood furnaces may be installed in compliance with PA 05-227. Technological advances in the form of Phase 2 units and retrofits for existing units that are currently available in the marketplace have improved efficiency and reduced emissions. We would support legislation requiring that all future outdoor wood furnaces being installed in Connecticut meet the standards for Phase 2 units. With the adoption of Phase 2 units into Public Act 05-227, Connecticut would have one of the strictest regulations for outdoor wood burning furnaces in the United States. Connecticut Farm Bureau would further like to suggest that the fines for misuse of an outdoor wood burning furnaces be increased and that those funds be made available to consumers to retrofit existing units or replace older units. This would help address the small number of units that are bothersome to their neighbors.

This proposed ban on outdoor wood burning furnaces does nothing to eliminate the use of the units that are currently being operated and will provide no consideration for improving the use of those units through currently available technology. Does it make any economic sense to essentially require the use of fossil fuel that has been transported thousands of miles when Connecticut is rich with an abundant fuel supply of wood literally in our own backyards? In these difficult economic times, it is more important that the legislature support the use of renewable alternative fuels for all Connecticut citizens and the jobs associated with distributing and installing outdoor wood burning furnaces, and the firewood producers who supply wood to those consumers who do not cut their own.



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Outdoor Wood Burning Furnace Fact Sheet

- Wood is a renewable resource that is readily available to all Connecticut citizens.
- Over 50% of the land base in Connecticut is forest land, with almost 80% in private ownership. Many owners of outdoor wood burning furnaces (OWFs) have a readily available supply of firewood from their own woodlots.
- The majority of firewood that is sold in Connecticut comes from the management of state and private forest land. Small, low valued hardwoods are often removed from a forest to improve the overall health of the forest and to reduce overcrowding. Tops left from timber harvesting are also removed in the form of firewood.
- Most firewood is delivered to the consumer within a twenty five mile radius of the point of origin.
- Natural gas was not included in the fuel comparison because it is not available in most areas of Connecticut.

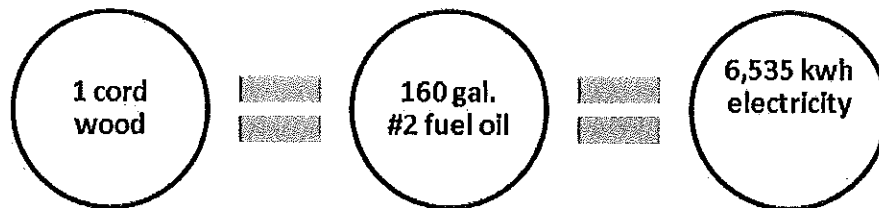
Cost to heat with wood vs. oil vs. electricity

Prices as of February 1, 2011

	Wood	#2 Fuel oil	Electricity
BTUs*	22,300,000/cord	138,690/gal	3,412/kwh
Unit cost**	\$225/cord	\$3.32/gal	\$.177/kwh
Cost equivalent	\$225	\$531	\$1,156.69

*CT Office of Policy and Management Energy Conversion Factors

** Average unit costs as of February 2011



- There are currently over 3,000 outdoor wood burning furnaces operating in the state of Connecticut.

- From February 10, 2006 to September 9, 2010, there were 879 complaints on OWFs filed with the CT DEP involving less than 165 units or approximately 5% of the total number of units in Connecticut.
- 471 of the 879 complaints involved 3 units.

Prepared by Connecticut Farm Bureau Association February 2011